Research Proposal for Ph.D. Pre-registration Seminar

The Study of Risk Taking Behaviour, Peer Pressure and Parent-Child Relationship among School Students of Ranchi Town

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1.0. Introduction

1.1 State of the Art

This study investigates the interaction between risk-taking behavior, peer pressure, and the parent-child relationship among school students in Ranchi town. Adolescence is a crucial time characterized by profound changes in social, emotional, and physical aspects of life,which often contribute to risk-taking behavior. Understanding the factors influencing this behavior is crucial for creating a supportive environment that promotes students' academic and personal development.

Adolescent risk-taking behavior is a complex phenomenon shaped by a web of interpersonal relationships. During this developmental stage, individuals are especially vulnerable to external influences, with peer pressure and the parent-child relationship playing key roles. Adolescents may engage in risky activities as a result of peer pressure, a type of social influence, in an attempt to fit in and be accepted by their peers. Meanwhile, the quality of the parent-child relationship, trust, and emotional support can either intensify or reduce the effects of peer pressure. A supportive family environment often helps adolescents navigate peer influences and make safer choices.

This study seeks to examine the relationships between risk-taking behavior, peer pressure, and the parent-child relationship, focusing on how these factors affect students in Ranchi town.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

1.2.1 Concept of Adolescence

Adolescence is a key stage of growth that bridges childhood and adulthood. Adolescence is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the period between the ages of 10 and 19. This falls under the larger WHO definition of "young people," which covers individuals between the ages of 10 and 24. Adolescence is often linked to puberty and the physical changes that precede reproductive maturity in many cultures. But in some cultures, adolescence is seen more widely, including not only physical development but also social, psychological, and emotional maturation. In these situations, the term "teen" years—or adolescence—usually refers to the ages of 12 to 20. The end of adolescence is not clearly defined, however it is often considered to be the second decade of life, or the time between puberty and legal adulthood. Significant changes in social connections, cognitive function, and physical growth occur during

this stage. The most noticeable changes are those that occur physically, with puberty signaling the beginning of adolescence through fast physical growth and sexual maturation. Challenges from childhood, such as gaining independence, forming an identity, and building relationships, continue into adolescence but are influenced by new physical and mental abilities. While adolescence is often thought of as a time of emotional turbulence due to hormones, most teenagers do not experience it this way. However, risky and antisocial behaviors do tend to increase during this period, peaking in late adolescence or early adulthood. The extension of education in modern society has sparked discussions about whether adolescence has been prolonged or if a new stage between adolescence and adulthood has emerged.

1.2.2 Concept of Risk-taking Behaviour

A time of biological, psychological, and social transformation is adolescence. This time span serves as a transition from childhood to maturity and helps people get ready to enter the adult world. In today's environment, adolescents encounter numerous developmental obstacles. Taking risks has been one of the most researched topics in the past ten years and a big problem in adolescence. **Erwin (1993)** defined adolescents who take risks may do so for intrinsic rewards, but the behavior's outcome is unpredictable due to the likelihood of bad health outcomes or social repercussions. According to Perkins (2002), risk-taking conduct is defined as actions that raise the likelihood of unfavorable social, legal, and health outcomes.

Numerous factors have influenced risk-taking processes throughout childhood and adulthood, including cognitive (i.e., risk perception), biological (i.e., hormonal effects), personality (i.e., sensation seeking), environmental (i.e., parents and peer group), and neurological (i.e., hormone effects). Adolescents risk taking behaviors often result from their inadequate knowledge of experience with behaviors such as physical injury(fighting) as well as behaviors with cumulative negative effects.

Theories related to Risk taking behavior

- **Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Leon Festinger)-** Cognitive dissonance is the result of having two opposing views or of having conduct and beliefs that do not support each other.

  Application to Risk taking Behavior- This theory clarifies why people could continue engaging in risky behaviors despite experiencing internal conflict or unfavorable results.

- **Arousal Theory (Hebb)**- According to arousal theory, people try to maintain an ideal level of arousal; when this level is too low, they engage in stimulating activities, which may involve taking risks.

  Application to Risk Taking- With regard to feeling understimulated or bored in particular, this hypothesis helps to explain why people can take a chance in order to attain higher levels of arousal and excitement.

  Types of Risk-taking behavior

- Substance use- Experimentation with or regular use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- Reckless Driving- Engaging in speeding, not wearing helmets and other unsafe driving practices.
- Sexual Activity- Engaging in unprotected sex (HIV AIDS), multiple partners and early initiation of sexual activity.
- Delinquency-Involvement in criminal activities such as theft, vandalism and fighting.
- Academics Risk- Truancy, cheating and neglecting academic responsibilities.

1.2.3 Concept of Peer Pressure

Once students enter school, the influence of the family often slows down or decreases, while the role of peers becomes more significant in shaping their motivation to succeed academically.

Peer pressure is a social phenomenon where individuals are influenced by their friends or classmates to adopt certain behaviors, attitudes, or values to fit into a group. This is especially common during adolescence, a key stage of development when people seek acceptance and a sense of identity. Peer pressure can have both positive and bad effects and can manifest itself in a variety of ways, such as overt persuasion or more covert signals.

Positively, peer pressure can encourage kids to participate in beneficial activities like attending class and volunteering in the community. However, it can also push them toward risky actions, like substance abuse, reckless driving, or participating in activities that go against their personal values. The desire to belong socially and the fear of being rejected make peer pressure a strong influence on behavior.

It's critical to comprehend peer pressure, particularly for teenagers who are most impacted by it. Young people can better manage peer pressure and make decisions that are in line with their values and well-being by increasing awareness and developing resilience.

As students grow older, their education changes as well. With biological and cognitive development, they move from the simpler system of elementary school with one teacher to middle and high school, where they attend hour-long classes with different teachers. Peer influence during this time can be both direct, such as when peers openly encourage certain behaviors, and indirect, such as when students are influenced by simply observing their peers. Peer pressure is particularly strong during adolescence, a time when social relationships and forming an identity are especially important.

Some related theories of Peer Pressure

- **Social Learning theory**- According to Bandura (1977), individual learn behaviors by observing and imitating others, especially such behaviors are positively reinforced by peers.

Application to Peer Pressure- Peer pressure is often a result of observing and mimicking the actions of peers who are perceived as popular or successful. For example, if an adolescence sees their peers receiving social approval for engaging in risky behavior like smoking, they might be more inclined to adopt the similar behavior to gain similar approval.

- **Developmental Theory of Adolescence (Erik Erikson, 1968)-** Erikson theory focuses on the stages of psychosocial development. During adolescence, individuals go through the stage of identity vs role confusion, where they seek to establish a sense of self and personal identity.

Application to Peer Pressure- During the critical developmental stage, peer groups become highly influential as adolescent experiments with different identities. Peer Pressure force in shaping an adolescent's identity, as they are more likely to conform to peer norms to avoid role confusion and gain social acceptance.

The role of peer pressure in Adolescence

Adolescence is a crucial stage for social development, characterized by a growing need for independence and a strong desire for peer acceptance. During this period, individuals increasingly look to their peers for validation and approval, which can greatly influence their behavior. Peer pressure can impact various aspects of an adolescent's life, including social behavior, academic performance, and even personal values. This influence can be positive, promoting behaviors like academic success, participation in sports, and involvement in socially responsible activities. On the other hand, it can also lead to negative outcomes, such as substance abuse, delinquency, and risky sexual behaviors.

1.2.4 Concept of Parent Child Relationship

One may argue that the most significant relationship a person can have is with their parents and children. A parent's close, personal relationship with their child is referred to as a parent-child relationship. The parent-child bond is made up of a variety of actions, emotions, and expectations that are specific to each parent and kid. The entire spectrum of a child's growth is involved in the interaction.

General Definition

The emotional, social, and psychological connection that exists between a parent and their child is referred to as the parent-child relationship. Common encounters and the strength of the bond between the two people define this relationship.

Developmental Definition

The interactions that support a child's emotional and psychological development are included in the parent-child connection from a developmental standpoint. Parenting techniques, attachment styles, and how parental behavior affects a child's growth are all included. According to Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory of development, children who have their basic needs addressed by caretakers will mature into trustworthy individuals, whereas infants who do not will grow up to be distrustful of other people.

The role of Parent Child Relationship in Adolescence:

The physical and mental changes that occur during adolescence have an impact on the interactions between parents and teenagers. Parents and teenagers must change their responsibilities during this time in order to have a more equal connection. During this period, parent-teen arguments increase in frequency and intensity, but they also aid in the mutual adjustment of both parties. Relationship success depends on how parents and teenagers resolve these disputes. They are more likely to adjust effectively and strengthen their bond if they can both feel and control a range of emotions, both good and negative, throughout disagreements. Therefore, as long as they manage their emotions appropriately, having these arguments can really strengthen their relationship.

The changes that teenagers go through as they mature are connected to changes in the relationships between parents and children. Hormones cause adolescents to want greater independence from their parents as they approach puberty. Conflicts stemming from this

frequently assist teenagers and their parents have more equitable and mature relationships. Improved abstract thinking and other forms of cognitive growth are also important. As teenagers develop their ability to think abstractly, they begin to view their connection with their parents as more collaborative. They start to regard things that were previously thought to be the parents' domain as their own. These modifications aid in changing the parent-adolescent dynamic from one in which parents are more knowledgeable and powerful to one in which there is reciprocal and equal interaction between the two parties.

Relationship Changes and Conflict Interactions between Parents and Children:

A certain amount of friction between parents and teenagers is healthy for families and aids in the adolescent's growth as an independent and unique person. On the other hand, a teen's mental and emotional well-being may suffer from too many confrontations. Teens who quarrel with their parents a lot are more likely to experience behavioral disorders, low self-esteem, challenges in the classroom, and increased substance use. There may be a reciprocal relationship between frequent confrontations and worse mental health, with the former potentially contributing to the latter. When disagreements contribute to or detract from the growth of a more equal parent-adolescent relationship is not well understood. Rather of focusing solely on the number of disputes, it's critical to understand the dynamics of these conflicts in order to better understand how they impact the relationship.

Emotional diversity is associated with stronger parent-child connections during adolescence. Families with more emotional variance during early disagreements had higher relationship quality over time than families with less emotional variability. As teenagers grew older, families experiencing more emotional ups and downs stated that mothers gave more independent support. Teens in these homes reported having less disputes than those in families with less emotional variety. This shows that families with greater emotional flexibility deal with their teen's urge for independence better than those with less emotional variability.

1.2.5 Concept of Types of School (Government vs. Private)

A student's experiences and conduct may be influenced by the kind of school they attend. The resources, curriculum, and social environments of government and private schools differ frequently, which can have an impact on kids' propensity for taking risks, their relationships with their parents, and their vulnerability to peer pressure.

1.3 Review of Literature

1.3.1 Studies related to Risk Taking behavior

Steinberg's (2008) study is that adolescents are more likely to engage in risk-taking behavior due to an imbalance between their mature cognitive abilities and still-developing emotional regulation and impulse control. Peer influence plays a significant role in driving these risky behaviors, but supportive parenting can reduce their likelihood.

Gardner, M., & Steinberg, L. (2005) studied in their experimental study, adolescents and adults were tested for their risk-taking behavior both alone and in the presence of peers. Adolescents were significantly more likely to take risks when in the company of their peers, whereas adults were less influenced by peer presence. This effect was especially strong among male adolescents and found on a conclusion that Peer influence dramatically amplifies risk-taking behavior in adolescents, showing the importance of social contexts in risky decision-making.

Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. (1993) focused on the influence of parenting styles on adolescent risk-taking. Authoritative parenting—characterized by high responsiveness and high demands—was associated with lower levels of adolescent risk-taking behaviors. In contrast, adolescents with authoritarian (strict, low warmth) or permissive (high warmth, low control) parents showed higher levels of risk-taking. Parental monitoring and communication were identified as key factors in reducing risky behaviors. This concluded that authoritative parenting serves as a protective factor against adolescent risk-taking behaviors.

Byrnes et al., (1999) this analysis examined gender differences in risk-taking across different domains, including health, physical, and financial risks. The study found that males engage in more risk-taking behaviors than females in most domains. Biological factors, such as testosterone levels, and social factors, like gender role expectations, were highlighted as contributing reasons for these differences and concluded that males are generally more likely to engage in risky behaviors than females, driven by both biological and socialization.

Neihart (1999) discussed the importance of systematic risk-taking in adolescent development. The author emphasized that engaging in risk-taking can be a critical part of identity formation and personal growth for adolescents. The study highlighted that while some risks can lead to negative outcomes, they are also essential for developing decision-making skills and resilience.

Ponton (1998) posits that adolescents take risks as a way to develop and define their identities. The book argues that risk-taking behaviors, although often viewed negatively, can lead to positive experiences that contribute to personal growth and self-discovery.

1.3.2 Studies related to Peer Pressure

Sharma & Charulatha (2024) found that peer pressure influences decision-making and behaviors, particularly in adolescence, affecting health and educational outcomes.

Tuteja (2022) reported that 16.4% of students in Delhi felt peer pressure significantly impacted their academic performance, indicating a widespread issue in educational settings.

Kindermann & Gest (2018) discussed how peer influence can also promote positive behaviors, such as academic engagement, while simultaneously contributing to negative outcomes like truancy.

1.3.3 Studies related to Parent Child Relationship

Grolnick, et al., (1989) examined how different parenting styles affect children's academic performance and self-regulation. Parents who were involved and provided autonomy support had children with higher intrinsic motivation and better academic performance. In contrast, controlling parenting was linked to lower motivation and poorer academic outcomes. The study emphasized that parenting that fosters autonomy and offers structure supports children's competence and school success and came to a conclusion that supportive and autonomy-promoting parenting is positively related to children's academic success and self-regulation, whereas controlling parenting can hinder these outcomes.

Laursen, B., & Collins, W. A. (2018) explored the changes in parent-child relationships during adolescence and how these changes impact emotional well-being. The findings indicated that while parent-child conflict may increase during adolescence, strong communication and parental support were critical in maintaining emotional stability and reducing risk behaviors and concluded that positive parent-child relationships, characterized by open communication and support, are protective factors for adolescent emotional well-being.

Yap, et al., (2014) study examined how different parenting styles impact adolescent mental health. The results showed that authoritative parenting (high warmth and high control) was associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety among adolescents, whereas neglectful parenting (low warmth, low control) was linked to higher levels of mental health issues and came to a conclusion that the quality of the parent-child relationship, especially authoritative parenting, plays a vital role in promoting mental health in adolescents.

Problem to be Investigated

The current research aims to investigate the potential correlations between Risk-taking behavior, Parent-child relationship and Peer Pressure among students from government and private schools in Ranchi town. The study will also assess the effects of gender, and the differences between joint and nuclear families. The topic of the study will be **"The Study of Risk-taking Behavior, Peer Pressure and Parent-Child Relationship among School Students of Ranchi town."**

1.4 Objectives of the investigation and Motivation

The objectives of the study will be as follows:

1. To examine the levels of Risk taking behavior, Peer Pressure and parent-child relationship among different subgroups of school students.
2. To examine the impact of Gender (Male and Female), Religion (Hindu and Muslim) and Types of school (Government and Private) on Risk taking Behavior, Peer Pressure Parent-child Relationship.
3. To examine the inter-relationship between Risk taking Behavior, Peer Pressure and Parent-child Relationship among school students in relation to gender, religion and types of schools.

Motivation

Existing research indicates that risk-taking behavior in adolescents is influenced by a complex interplay of peer pressure, parent-child relationships, and the type of school environment. Understanding these influences is crucial for developing effective strategies to mitigate risky behaviors and promote healthier developmental outcomes. This study aims to fill gaps in the current literature by examining these variables in the context of government and private schools, with a focus on gender differences.

1.5 Research Hypothesis

1. The levels of Risk taking Behavior, Peer Pressure and Parent-child Relationship will vary among different subgroups of school students.
2. There will be significant impact of Gender (Male and Female), Religion (Hindu and Muslim) and Types of Schools (Government and Private) on Risk taking Behavior, Peer Pressure and Parent-child Relationship among school students of Ranchi Town.
3. There will be no significant co relation between Risk taking Behavior and Peer Pressure among school students of Ranchi Town.

4. There will be no significant co relation between Risk taking Behavior and Parent-child Relationship among school students of Ranchi Town.

1.5.1 Research Design and Methodology

The Sample

The total sample for the study will be 240 school students from different selected schools of Ranchi Town, Jharkhand. The selection of sample will be based on stratified random sampling technique.it will be based on Gender (Male and Female), Religion (Hindu and Muslim) and type of school (Government and Private).

There will be 8 sample subgroups based on 2x2x2 factorial design and each group will be consisted of 30 cases.

The factors of stratification are-

Gender-2 (Male and Female)

Religion-2 (Hindu and Muslim)

Types of School-2 (Government and Private School)

Table 1

Sample Design

Types of School	**Government**				**Private**				**Total**
Religion	**Hindu**		**Muslim**		**Hindu**		**Muslim**		
Gender	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Boys**	**Girls**	
	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	
	60		60		60		60		
Total	120				120				**240**

1.5.2 Variables

Dependent variables

- Risk Taking Behaviour
- Peer Pressure
- Parent-child Relationship

Independent variables

- Gender
- Religion

- Types of School (Government and Private)

Controlled Variables

- Gender (Only Male and Female)
- Age (16-18 years)
- District (Only Ranchi District)

1.6 Selection Criteria

Inclusion Criteria

- Age of the sample will be 16 to 18 years.
- Both Gender will be included.
- Students from Government and Private schools only.

Exclusion Criteria

- Sample below 16 years as well as above 18 years will be excluded.
- The students will be only from Ranchi District.

1.6.1 Sample Selection

The selection of the will be done in three stages:

1. In the first stage, the researcher will prepare a list of 11th and 12th grade students, aged 16 to 18, from various schools located in Ranchi town.
2. In the second stage from the list of 240 students will be selected using Personal Data Questionnaire prepared by the researcher.
3. In the third stage the selected sample will be categorized to 8 sub-groups on the based on their Gender (Male and Female), Religion (Hindu and Muslim) and types of school (Private and Government). Each sub groups will consist 30 cases.

1.7 Source of Data and Tools to be used in Collection of Data

1.7.1 Personal Data Questionnaire (PDQ)

Personal Data Questionnaire (PDQ) will be prepared by the researcher by the Research Scholar. It will be used to obtain information about respondents' age, gender, religion, types of schools.

1.7.2 Peer Pressure Scale

The Peer Pressure Scale by Singh and Saini typically consists of 25 items based on a five-point Likert Scale. The age range of this scale is 16-19 years. The sample size for this scale were 446

adolescents. The Reliability and validity of this scale is 0.79 and 0.80 respectively. These items are designed to capture various aspects of Peer Pressure and its theoretical perspectives and risky behaviors associated with Peer Pressure.

Parent Child Relationship Scale (PCRS-RN)

The Parent-Child Relationship Scale (PCRS-RN) developed by Late Nalini Rao (1989) typically consists of 100 items based on five-point Likert Scale. The age range of this scale is 12-18 years. The Reliability and validity of this scale is 0.77 and 0.80 respectively These items are designed to assess various dimensions of the parent-child relationship, including emotional bonding, communication, parental support, and conflict.

Risk taking Questionnaire (RTQ)

This Questionnaire (RTQ) was developed by Dr. Sinha and Dr. Arora (2011) typically consists of 40 items based on a five-point Likert Scale. The age range of this scale is 14-50 years. The Reliability of this scale is 0.79.

1.8. Analysis of Data

- **Descriptive Statistics**: To determine the mean and Standard Deviation of Risk-taking Behavior, Parent-child Relationship, and Peer Pressure of different subgroups of school students.
- **t-tests**: To compare the Risk-taking Behavior, Peer Pressure and Parent-child Relationship between different sub-groups.
- **ANOVA**:

➢ To analyze the interaction effects of Gender on Risk taking Behavior, Peer Pressure, Parent-child Relationship, and Types of school.

➢ To analyze the interaction Religion of Gender on Risk taking Behavior, Peer Pressure, Parent-child Relationship, and Types of school.

➢ To analyze the interaction effects of Types of School on Risk taking Behavior, Peer Pressure, Parent-child Relationship, and Types of school.

- **Correlation Analysis**: To examine the Relationships between Risk-taking Behavior, Parent-child Relationship, and Peer Pressure.
- **Graphical representation** of results will be drawn.

1.9. Significance of the Study

Adolescence is a crucial developmental period characterized by increased vulnerability to external influences, including family dynamics and peer pressure. During this time, risk-taking behaviors can lead to significant adverse consequences such as drug addiction, criminal activity, poor academic performance, and health issues. This study is relevant for several reasons.

1. **Understanding Adolescent Behavior:** The research seeks to explore the relationships among risk-taking behavior, peer pressure, and parent-child dynamics, and how these factors collectively influence adolescent behavior. It provides important insights into the psychosocial factors that either encourage or deter adolescents from engaging in risky activities.
2. **Addressing the Influence of Peer Pressure:** Peer pressure plays a substantial role in shaping adolescent decision-making. This research aims to investigate how peer influence affects risk-taking behavior and how it interacts with the family environment, offering insights into potential strategies to mitigate its negative consequences.
3. **Strengthening Parent-Child Relationships:** The study highlights the importance of a strong parent-child relationship as a protective factor. By identifying how parents can help their children cope with peer pressure and avoid risky behaviors, the research will guide efforts to improve family dynamics and support positive development in young people.
4. **Educational and Policy Interventions:** The results of this research can help schools, policymakers, and counselors understand what leads to risk-taking among adolescents. It will assist in creating specific strategies to improve communication between parents and children, reduce the influence of peer pressure, and build environments that promote safe and responsible behavior in students.
5. **Cultural Context:** Since this study focuses on students from Ranchi Town, it provides insights that match the area's unique cultural, social, and educational background. Understanding risk-taking behavior in this setting will help create programs and policies that are suited to the specific needs of adolescents in Ranchi.

In summary, this study is very important for tackling key issues faced by adolescents. It lays the groundwork for preventive actions that can reduce risky behaviors and support healthier, more positive development in students.

1.10. Its Relevance to the Present-Day Problem and Need of the Study

Understanding the impact of risk-taking behavior, parent-child relationships, and peer pressure is essential for developing interventions to improve adolescent well-being. This research will provide insights into how these factors interact and vary by school type, offering valuable information for educators, parents, and policymakers.

1.11. Contribution to Existing Knowledge

This study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge by exploring the combined effects of gender, peer pressure, parent-child relationship, and types of school on risk-taking behavior, a relatively under-researched area. It will help in understanding how these variables influence adolescent behavior in different educational settings.

1.12. Future Work

Future research could expand on this study by exploring additional factors influencing risk-taking behavior and examining the effectiveness of interventions based on the findings. Further studies could also investigate similar variables in different geographical locations to generalize the results. This proposal outlines a comprehensive approach to studying the complex interactions between risk-taking behavior, parent-child relationships, and peer pressure among students in government and private schools.

TENTATIVE CHAPTERS OF THE THESIS

CHAPTER I- INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER II- REVIEW OF LITERATURE

CHAPTER III-METHODOLOGY

- OBJECTIVES
- SAMPLE
- SAMPLE DESIGN
- TOOLS
- PROCEDURE
- PLAN OF ANALYSIS

CHAPTER IV-RESULT AND DISSCUSSION

CHAPTER V- SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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